

Meeting with DCA

November 4, 2010

Location: Department of Education

Meeting attended by:

Commissioner
Lori Grifa, DCA

Deputy Commissioner
Betty Lou DeCroce, DCA

Deputy Director of LGS
Marc Pfeiffer, DCA

Acting Commissioner
Rochelle Hendricks, DOE

Senator
James Beach, 6th District

Chief of Staff for Senator Beach
Ivy Rovner

Mayor
Frank North, Merchantville

Administrative Assistant for Mayor North
Janice Engelke

Mayor
Bernie Platt, Cherry Hill

Chief of Staff for Mayor Platt
Dan Keashen

Mayor North opened meeting with timeline of steps that Merchantville has taken to date. He also spoke about Merchantville's Study Commission and his criteria for choosing the members.

Mayor Platt stated that they still needed to chose Cherry Hill's Study Commission and planned to move forward after this meeting.

The conversation turned to how the study would be financed.

DCA stated that they did not have funding to finance this study.

Senator Beach suggested using existing experts to lower cost of study and wanted to use the Merchantville-Cherry Hill Study as a template for future municipalities to use.

Lori Grifa stated that she did not feel using outside paid consultants was the way to proceed. She felt that each municipality should use their own staff and the resources of Camden County, DCA and the Department of Education. She also offered that after she received the application from Merchantville and Cherry Hill that she would reach out to the President of Rutgers University to aid in the study.

Mayor North stated that he was waiting for Cherry Hill to form their commission so the two commissions could work together to submit the application to DCA.

Lori Grifa requested a letter of intent from each municipality as a place hold till the application is submitted.

DCA reviewed information that needed to be included in the application including:

- How to select a study commission
- There is a one to three year window to conduct the study.
- Ways the study could be approved.
 - o Vote by referendum
 - o Governing body votes

Traditionally if both municipalities vote yes for consolidation then details of how the two municipalities will join will be decided and voted on the following year. The two municipalities could also vote for consolidation and the plan for consolidation at one time.

Also discussed at the meeting was the status of the Merchantville Connecting to the Future group. Marc Pfeiffer confirmed that DCA did have petitions, an application and a copy of Merchantville's resolution submitted by the group. He also stated that the application was being reviewed by the Attorney General's office because it did not fit the exact criteria outlined in the consolidation statutes.